



AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES HANDBOOK



U.S. EMBASSY
QUITO, ECUADOR

U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL
GUAYAQUIL, ECUADOR

WELCOME TO ECUADOR!

The United States Embassy in Quito and the Consulate General in Guayaquil welcome you to Ecuador. We hope that your stay here will be memorable and enjoyable, whether you're coming to visit or to live. There are many things to do and see in Ecuador, including visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of historic Quito, climbing the snowcapped volcanoes, exploring the Galapagos Islands and venturing into the mysterious jungles and rivers that lead to the Amazon, just to name a few.

If problems arise during your stay in Ecuador, the staffs of the American Citizen Services (ACS) units of the U.S. Embassy in Quito and the Consulate General in Guayaquil are ready to assist in any way we can. This booklet describes important services provided by the ACS units and addresses specific problems you may encounter while in Ecuador. It explains what the Embassy and Consulate General can and cannot do for you and what you can do to help yourself. The third part summarizes certain Ecuadorian laws that are especially important for U.S. citizens.

If you have questions on any of these matters, please feel free to contact either of the ACS units for further information.

The U.S. Embassy in Quito is located at Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro. The telephone number for public call-in hours for U.S. citizens is (011) 593-2-398-5000. Calls regarding anything non-emergency are accepted Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and Friday from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. You can email us at ACSQuito@state.gov or visit our website at: ecuador.usembassy.gov.

The U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil is located at the corner of Avenida 9 de Octubre and Garcia Moreno. The telephone number is (011) 593-4-232-3570 during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or 232-1152 for after-hours emergencies. You can email us at ACSGuayaquil@state.gov or visit our website at: guayaquil.usconsulate.gov.

Again, bienvenidos al Ecuador!

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I. AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

This is a general guide to the services provided by the American Citizen Services units of the U.S. Embassy in Quito and U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil.

The U.S. Embassy in Quito serves the following provinces: Bolivar, Carchi, Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Esmeraldas, Imbabura, Napo, Orellana, Pastaza, Pichincha, Santo Domingo de los Tsachilas, Sucumbíos, Tungurahua, and Morona Santiago. The U.S. Embassy in Quito is located at Avigiras St. and Eloy Alfaro Av., across the street from SOLCA Hospital in Quito. The 24 hour telephone number is (593-2) 398-5000. After business hours, the Marine Security Guard answers this number and will contact the Embassy's duty officer if a genuine emergency exists. The website is: ecuador.usembassy.gov.

The U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil serves the following provinces: Azuay, Cañar, El Oro, the Galapagos Islands, Guayas, Santa Elena, Loja, Los Rios, Manabí and Zamora Chinchipe. The Consulate in Guayaquil is located at Av. 9 de Octubre and Garcia Moreno, next to the Hotel Oro Verde. The telephone number is (593-4) 232-3570. The after-hours emergency number is (593-4) 232-1152. The website is: guayaquil.usconsulate.gov. The Embassy and Consulate are closed on all U.S. and Ecuadorian public holidays.

The American Citizen Services unit of the Embassy/Consulate provides a variety of services. Listed below are some of the most common:

- 1. Enrollment for Security and Travel Information:** All U.S. citizens living or traveling in Ecuador are encouraged to enroll for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at: www.travel.state.gov. Millions of U.S. citizens travel abroad every year and encounter no difficulties. However, U.S. Embassies and Consulates assist nearly 200,000 U.S. citizens each year who are victims of crime, accidents or illness, or whose family and friends need to contact them in an emergency. When an emergency happens, or if natural disaster, terrorism, or civil unrest strikes during your travel, the Embassy/Consulate can be your source of assistance and information. By enrolling, you help the Embassy/Consulate locate you when you might need them the most. Enrollment is voluntary and costs nothing,

but it should be a big part of your travel planning and security. Under federal laws regarding the Privacy Act, the Embassy/Consulate cannot release information about U.S. citizens to any inquirers (including relatives or other government agencies) without written permission. U.S. citizens can indicate on the online enrollment form to whom personal information may be released.

2. **Passports:** U.S. passports are printed in the United States. The Embassy/Consulate receives and approves passport applications, which are then sent electronically to the U.S. Passport Office in Tucson, Arizona for printing. In most cases, the new passport arrives approximately 10 days from the date of the application appointment. If a passport has been lost or stolen, a police report should be obtained from the Ecuadorian Police as soon as possible. Applicants should bring the police report, known as the “denuncia,” with them when they apply for a new passport.

Applicants seeking to replace lost/stolen passport must also report the loss to local courts (“Juzgados de Contravenciones”) or attention centers for tourists.

- **Tourist Security Service:** Reina Victoria N 21-208 y Vicente Ramón Roca
Telephone: 593-2-254-3932 / 593-2-252-2293
(Open 24 hours a day Monday – Sunday)
- **Judicial Police:** Juan Leon Mera 5565 y Carrion (first floor, Juzgado de Contravenciones)
Telephone: 593-2- 255-0770/ 593- 2- 255-0918
(Open Monday – Sunday 8 am to 10 pm)
- **Mayor’s Residence (“Casa de los Alcaldes”):** Calle Chile between García Moreno y Venezuela- Plaza Grande
Telephone: 593-2-251-0896 / 593-2-295-5785
(Open Monday – Sunday 10 am to 6 pm)

- **Quitumbe Bus Terminal (Inside the Terminal on the main building):** Avenida Mariscal Sucre S/N y Condor Ñan
Telephone: 593-2 381 4810
(Open Monday – Sunday 6 am to 9 pm)
- **AIRPORT MARISCAL SUCRE (Watch Unit, “Unidad de Vigilancia”):** Av. Amazonas y De la Prensa s/n.
Telephone: 593-2-294-4900 (ext. 2361 – 2360)
(Open 24 hours a day Monday-Sunday)

Additionally, applicants replacing lost/stolen passports must obtain a report from Ecuadorian Immigration located at Amazonas N32-171 y República (in front of Mall “El Jardín”) showing entry into Ecuador using the lost/stolen passport.

Please check the Embassy/Consulate websites for the appointment procedure and current fees for passport applications. Please note that fees are subject to change. To qualify as a renewal, applicants must present their previous passport with the application. Passports for those 16 years of age and over are valid for ten years; for those under 16 years of age, passports are valid for five years. The Embassy/Consulate is authorized to issue limited-validity passports in cases of emergency, as determined by a Consular Officer. Be advised that oversight of the expiration date of a passport or a lack of planning does not constitute an emergency. The American Citizen Services unit can also add extra pages to passports (maximum two times) for a fee. An appointment is also required for this service. All applicants must appear in person, including minors. In cases of minors applying, both parents must be present to sign a minor’s application in front of the Consular Officer. If one parent is unable to be physically present, a signed and notarized Statement of Parental Consent (DS-3053) must accompany the application. If one parent is deceased, the certificate of death must accompany the application. Please visit the Embassy/Consulate websites for more detailed information on passport requirements.

3. **Registration of Birth of U.S. Citizens:** Children born outside of the United States who are eligible for U.S. citizenship should have their births registered at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate as soon as

possible. Although applications are accepted up until the child's eighteenth birthday, applications submitted years after the child's birth may take significant time to resolve. The first step is to apply for the child's Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) by appointment in the consular district where the child was born (see page 3 above to determine if the province in which your child was born lies within the consular district of the Quito Embassy or the Guayaquil Consulate General). The child and both biological parents should appear in person at the time of application. We also recommend that parents apply for a U.S. passport for their child at the same time as the Report of Birth Abroad certificate. Please visit the Embassy/Consulate websites for more detailed information on birth registration requirements. Basic requirements include:

- Child and both parents present
- Statement of Parental Consent (DS-3053) (if applicable)
- Either the "Copia Integra de la Inscripción de Nacimiento" (the handwritten long form) or the new birth certificate form implemented by the Civil Registry on April 5, 2010 for children born on or after that date and who were registered in the Provincial Direction office, which includes the child's ID number. **Other versions of Ecuadorian birth certificates will not be accepted.**
- Parents' original marriage certificate (if applicable)
- U.S. passport or government-issued proof of identity for both parents
- Original divorce decree for a previously married parent, or original death certificate of any previous spouse
- Proof of the time the U.S. citizen parent lived in the United States
- Affidavit of parentage (if applicable)
- Application for U.S. passport (DS-11) completed online and printed out. The application can be found at: travel.state.gov/passport/forms/ds11/ds11_842.html
- One photo of the child (5 cm x 5 cm on a white background)
- Cash or credit card to pay fees for both the Report of Birth Abroad and U.S. passport. The Embassy/Consulate

accepts the following forms of payment: U.S. dollars, Visa, Master Card, Discover, American Express and Diner's Club.

In cases in which paternity or maternity of the child is in question, the Consular Officer may request additional proof including, but not limited to, family photos, baptism records or a DNA test.

If qualified, the child's Consular Report of Birth Abroad and U.S. passport will be available to pick approximately 10 days after the application is approved if you applied in Quito; or if you applied in the Consulate General in Guayaquil, it will be mailed to you via DHL delivery, arriving approximately 10 days after the application is approved.

4. **Notarial Services:** Consular Officers can notarize and certify copies of documents for use in the United States. Please check our website for current fee information. All notarials are done by appointment. Once an appointment is obtained, the applicant must bring the following documents:
 - Unsigned document to be notarized
 - A valid photo ID. (i.e., passport, driver's license or Ecuadorian national ID card)
 - If the document needs to be witnessed, please bring the necessary witnesses and ensure they have valid photo ID
5. **Country Information and Travel Messages:** The Department of State issues Country Specific Information (CSI) on every country in the world. The CSI contains useful information on travel, crime, visa requirements and more. The Department of State also issues Travel Alerts and Travel Warnings about various countries. Travelers can view these documents at: www.travel.state.gov. Travelers should keep in mind that visa requirements for other countries are subject to change so they should confirm the visa requirements with the Embassy/Consulate of the country they plan to visit.

For detailed information on how to have a safe trip abroad and for traveling tips, please visit the State Department's website at: travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html. This website contains information on trip planning, customs and import restrictions, taking

a pet overseas, how to receive mail, health information, emergency planning and much more.

6. **Income Tax Forms:** Internal Revenue Service (IRS) forms are available at the IRS website: www.irs.gov. There is also more information on filing taxes abroad on the Embassy/Consulate websites. Consular staff can assist U.S. citizens in finding forms online but they are not trained tax advisors. If there is a complicated tax question, U.S. citizens should seek guidance directly from the IRS or a licensed tax preparer.
7. **Absentee Voting Ballots:** For federal, state, and local elections in the United States, U.S. citizens may register for absentee voting ballots through the American Citizen Services unit. During a general election, voters may also send a request for an absentee ballot, and the ballot itself, to the United States through the Embassy/Consulate. If voters wish to take advantage of this, please bring the sealed request or ballot to the American Citizen Services unit (no appointment required). More information on voting overseas can be found on the Embassy website: ecuador.usembassy.gov/service/living-in-ecuador/voting-overseas.html, or at: www.fvap.gov.
8. **Selective Service Registration:** All U.S. citizen males ages 18 to 25 must register with Selective Service. To register and for more information please visit the Selective Service website at: www.sss.gov.
9. **Social Security:** U.S. citizens wishing to apply for a Social Security number or benefits may do so at the American Citizen Services unit at the Embassy in Quito on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. or at the Consulate in Guayaquil on Monday through Thursday from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. (subject to change, please check our websites). We accept applications for Social Security numbers or benefits, but the paperwork is processed off-site and can take time to process. Any problems concerning receipt or non-receipt of Social Security benefits can also be brought to the American Citizen Services unit for assistance.

10. Benefits for Senior Citizens: According to the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution, senior citizens aged 65 and over are entitled to discounts and other benefits from both private and public institutions in the country. These benefits are not limited to Ecuadorian citizens, but are available to all senior citizens who have established legal residence in the country, including U.S. citizens. To receive these benefits, senior citizens need only present valid identification, such as a passport or government identity card (“cedula”). These benefits include the following:

- Free health care and medications
- Discounts for public and private transportation, as well as cultural events such as museum admissions, movies, and theater presentations
- Special tax exemptions
- Exemptions from certain legal fees (such as notarial fees)

Questions about these benefits can be directed to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion, online at:

www.mies.gov.ec.

11. Protection of Property: A Consular Officer cannot take possession of the property of a U.S. citizen, except in case of death. In the case of a property dispute in Ecuador, the American Citizen Services unit maintains a list of local attorneys licensed by the Ecuadorian Bar Association (Colegio de Abogados de Ecuador), including several who specialize in real estate law. This list for the Quito area is available at:

ecuador.usembassy.gov/root/pdfs/acs/assistance/attorneys.pdf and

for Guayaquil at:

guayaquil.usconsulate.gov/attorney_information.html.

The Embassy/Consulate assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability, reputation of, or quality of services provided by the persons contained on these lists.

II. PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF U.S. CITIZENS

The most important function of the Embassy/Consulate is assistance to U.S. citizens and their relatives while abroad. This section discusses some of the more critical problems that can confront U.S. citizens while in Ecuador. Although the Embassy/Consulate is prepared to help in any way we can, the assistance we can offer is limited in many instances by U.S. and Ecuadorian laws. However, there is much U.S. citizens can do to help themselves.

1. Missing Persons: Relatives frequently call upon the American Citizen Services unit to locate a U.S. citizen believed to be in Ecuador. Often in such cases, the relatives or friends have not heard from the U.S. citizen for an extended period of time and are concerned for his or her welfare. In other cases, a family emergency (such as death) requires immediate contact with the U.S. citizen. While the American Citizen Services units can assist you in trying to track down a friend or family member, communications can be difficult as the person inquiring often times has no detailed itinerary and only a vague idea where the U.S. citizen might be. This is compounded in Ecuador because communications (phone, internet, mail) between rural parts of Ecuador and the United States can be slow and unreliable and persons traveling in the jungle or mountains may be out of touch with the outside world for several weeks at a time.

2. Touring and Backpacking Safety: Crime is a serious problem in Ecuador, especially in large cities, and the number of violent incidents in recent years has increased. U.S. citizens have been robbed, assaulted, kidnapped, raped and murdered and the conviction rate for those arrested for crimes is very low.

To help minimize the risk of such incidents, and ensure that U.S. citizens can be located or contacted in case of emergencies, the Embassy/Consulate recommends that all U.S. citizens traveling to Ecuador take the following precautions:

- a) Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at: www.travel.state.gov.

- b) Following a criminal incident, file a “denuncia,” or “police report,” with the local police and to inform the American Citizen Services unit of the Embassy/Consulate. To assist with filing a “denuncia,” the Ecuadorian authorities have opened several service centers in Quito where police reports may be filed. You can also call 1800 TURISMO (887476) to find out about where is the closest local court or tourist attention center available.
- c) Try to avoid traveling alone. Join other tourists going along the same route if traveling alone in Ecuador. Backpacking alone in isolated parts of Ecuador is not safe. It is safer to travel in groups.
- d) If your plans take you to remote and isolated parts of Ecuador, consider hiring an experienced guide. However, one should first ask for references and consult with local alpine associations, reputable travel agencies or with U.S. references with local knowledge of the area.
- e) Do not make ostentatious displays of cash or possessions.
- f) Camp at night near other backpackers, if possible. Avoid dangerous areas. Do not travel alone at night.
- g) Instead of keeping passports, money or airline tickets in a wallet or backpack, safeguard them in a money belt or necklace pouch beneath your clothes to prevent easy theft. If you have a permanent or semi-permanent residence established, it is advisable to leave your passport in a secure location, but always carry a copy with you.
- h) Be sure to register at all the military checkpoints along the trail or the rivers in the Oriente (the jungle or Amazon region).
- i) If you encounter problems along the trail, report them to the nearest police or military post. Once back in Quito or Guayaquil, report any unresolved problems to the Embassy/Consulate.
- j) Leave a detailed itinerary of travel plans with a friend or contact in Ecuador, so that if you do not return by a designated date, the American Citizen Services unit at the Embassy/Consulate can be notified and a search can be initiated.

- k) While backpacking in Ecuador one can experience all four seasons in one day. Be prepared for rapid and unexpected changes in climate and temperature by packing the appropriate clothing and equipment.
 - l) Because of the rugged countryside and the volatile nature of the equatorial weather, transportation does not always run on schedule. Landslides occasionally block roads, and buses break down from time to time. Airplane flights are often delayed due to bad weather. Travelers are advised to follow local custom and accept the uncertainties of travel in Ecuador. Do not schedule a trip so tightly that a delay will spoil it.
3. **Financial Emergencies:** If a U.S. citizen finds him or herself temporarily destitute, the American Citizen Services unit of the Embassy/Consulate can place calls to family or friends in the United States who can send money. Western Union operates in many locations throughout Ecuador and travelers may choose to use their services for money transfers. Numerous Western Union locations exist in both Quito and in Guayaquil, all of which can be found through the Western Union web site at:
www.westernunion.com, by clicking on “Find a Location.”

Instructions on how to send money through the Department of State can be found at:
ecuador.usembassy.gov/service/assistance/financial-assistance.html. The entire transaction can be done within one or two days, depending on how quickly family or friends respond.

If you have attempted and failed to obtain funds from private sources, we can discuss alternative options for obtaining financial assistance.

4. **Medical Emergencies:** The Embassy/Consulate websites contain information on health and medical information for Ecuador. They include a list of hospitals and contact information in Ecuador. The American Citizen Services unit is not authorized to recommend individual doctors or dentists.

5. **Arrests:** All foreigners in Ecuador are subject to Ecuadorian laws. Ecuadorian authorities are responsible for investigating crimes and foreigners not cleared by the investigation can be tried by the Ecuadorian judicial system. Foreigners found guilty and sentenced to prison generally serve their sentences in Ecuadorian prisons, unless an international prison transfer can be arranged. Note that while the Ecuadorian legal system has some similarities to criminal law known and used in the United States, there are many important differences. Ecuador is a developing country with limited financial resources; hence the physical conditions in Ecuadorian jails are not up to U.S. standards. There are stiff penalties for drug violations; avoid any involvement with illegal drugs overseas. If a U.S. citizen is arrested, the Ecuadorian government is required by the Vienna Convention to notify the Embassy/Consulate of the arrest “without delay.” If the Embassy/Consulate is not notified, prisoners should be firm but polite in demands to have the authorities do so. Embassy/Consulate staff make regular visits to check on the physical and emotional well-being of U.S. citizens in prison, investigate allegations of mistreatment and encourage good rapport and a cooperative relationship with host country prison directors, judges, law enforcement officials and prosecutors.
6. **Deaths:** If a U.S. citizen dies in Ecuador, the Embassy/Consulate will notify the next-of-kin as soon as possible. Within the limits of Ecuadorian law, we can assist the family with the return or burial of the deceased in accordance with their wishes.

If the next-of-kin is not present in Ecuador, the Embassy/Consulate can take possession of the personal estate or possessions of the deceased and return or distribute them in accordance with the wishes of the legal heir or heirs. We will also prepare and provide copies to the next-of-kin of an official Report of Death of a U.S. Citizen Abroad, which is necessary for insurance and other legal purposes in the United States.

III. IMPORTANT ECUADORIAN LAWS

Certain Ecuadorian laws are especially important for U.S. citizens to know. Remember, while in Ecuador, U.S. citizens are subject to Ecuadorian laws and the subsequent penalties for breaking them.

1. Immigration Laws:

A. Procedure to Enter the Country:

- a) A valid U.S. passport with six months validity is required to enter and depart Ecuador. Tourists must also provide evidence of return or onward travel. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of 90 days or less per 12-month period. If you are planning a visit longer than 90 days, you must obtain a non-immigrant visa in advance of your arrival under another category such as cultural, work, student or family reunification. This non-immigrant visa must then be registered at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within 30 days from the date of arrival and a subsequent registration is required at the census office of the immigration department. More detailed information and requirements for non-immigrant visas in Ecuador can be found on Ecuador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs website at: www.mmrree.gob.ec/servicios/req_visas.asp. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs handles non-immigrant visas, the Extranjería, under the Ministry of Interior, handles immigrant visas.
- b) Ecuadorian laws allow dual nationals and their children born overseas to enter Ecuador without proof of Ecuadorian citizenship provided they declare dual-nationality upon entry. Dual nationals are permitted to remain in Ecuador without any time limitations. Nevertheless, at the time of departure from Ecuador, dual nationals are required to provide proof of Ecuadorian citizenship, such as an Ecuadorian national I.D card or an Ecuadorian passport.
- c) U.S. citizen short-term tourists do not need an entry visa and will receive a temporary entry permit (type T-1, T-2 or T-3) upon presentation of a valid passport and disembarkation/embarkation card. Travelers will need to surrender the card to immigration authorities when leaving Ecuador. Travelers will not be permitted to leave the country without this card. It is recommended that the card be stapled inside the passport to make sure it is not lost.

- d) Entry permits (type T-1 or T-2) allow tourists in transit to remain in Ecuador for a maximum 10 days. T-3 permits allow visitors to remain in Ecuador for a maximum of 90 days per calendar year.

B. Procedures to Stay in the Country:

- a) Immigrants may reside indefinitely in Ecuador, but their business activities are limited to those which are authorized by their visas. Immigrant visas must be registered at Ecuador's Ministry of Interior, "Dirección General de Extranjería del Ministerio de Interior." For the most up-to-date location, visit their website at: <http://www.ministeriodelinterior.gob.ec>. Once the visa has been registered, the bearer must report yearly to the immigration office in the province of residence.
- b) Non-immigrants may stay exclusively for the period of time indicated on their visas (90 days without a visa) and may engage only in those activities authorized by their visas. The category of all visas may be changed if the request is presented 30 days prior to the expiration of the visa.

C. Departure of Foreigners:

- a) Immigrants must obtain an exit permit 72 hours prior to departure at the immigration offices by presenting their valid passport and visa, identity card (cédula de identidad), military exit fee certificate (comprobante militar - only for males from 18 to 55 years of age) and the immigration exit certificate.

During their first two years of residence in Ecuador, immigrants may not be absent from the country for more than 90 days each calendar year. Immigrants may not be absent for more than 18 months after the third year from the date Ecuadorian residency was obtained.

- b) Short-term tourists without visas will obtain their exit permits at the overland border points, seaports or airports directly from the immigration officer by presenting their passport and the disembarkation/embarkation card.

- c) In order to depart Ecuador, U.S. citizens must present a valid U.S. passport. Effective, February 8, 2011, the airport tax to depart Ecuador is included in the price of the airline ticket. If you stay in Ecuador beyond 90 days per 12-month period as a tourist or beyond the terms of your visa, you will be barred from re-entering Ecuador for nine consecutive months from the date of your departure. In some cases, a substantial fine may be imposed by Ecuadorian Immigration prior to your departure.
2. **Customs Laws:** If entering as a tourist, the Ecuadorian Customs Service allows the entry of a variety of items into the country, provided they are considered personal belongings. In the case of electronic appliances, the general rule is one of each type (i.e. laptop, camera, Ipod, etc.). If arriving as a resident, please visit the link below and review the legislation under “Ley Organica de Aduanas” for a complete list of items that may enter tax free and those that will have to pay taxes upon entry into Ecuador:
www.aduana.gov.ec/contenido/procViajeros.html.
3. **Narcotics Laws:** It is illegal in Ecuador to cultivate, process, sell, possess, use or export narcotics. This includes hashish, marijuana, opium, heroin and cocaine. There are stiff penalties for drug violations; avoid any involvement with illegal drugs overseas. The maximum penalty for such violations is 16 years in jail.
4. **Traffic Laws:** Motorists and pedestrians in Ecuador should use extreme caution. Traffic laws are customarily ignored and traffic can be unpredictable and dangerous. If driving a vehicle involved in an accident, you may be arrested, regardless of whether you caused the accident. We suggest that drivers be extra defensive while driving in Ecuador, or to avoid driving unless it is absolutely necessary.
5. **Marriage Laws:** If two foreign nationals wish to marry in Ecuador, they must have a valid non-immigrant visa (known as a “12 Visa,” such as for a student, employment, volunteer, cultural exchange, business, etc.). If one person is under a valid permit for tourism purposes (T-3 permit), the marriage cannot be approved,

unless his or her status is changed to a 12-X or a 12-IX visa by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If a foreign national and an Ecuadorian wish to marry in Ecuador, the foreign national must have a valid “12 visa” as well.

A U.S. citizen who wants to get married in Ecuador must establish, to the satisfaction of the Ecuadorian authorities, that he or she is free to marry under the laws of the state of his or her residence in the U.S. Additionally, Ecuadorian law requires non-residents of Ecuador to reside in Ecuador for 75 consecutive days prior to the date they wish to marry. Exceptions are granted if the non-resident has Ecuadorian children; in that case they may marry before 75 days by having an interview with the person in charge of marriage (Jefe de Matrimonios) at the Civil Registry (Registro Civil). If authorized, they can get married in what is known as marriage by exception (matrimonio por excepcion).

To be legal, all marriages must be performed by an Ecuadorian civil authority and are only conducted in Guayaquil or Quito. “Matrimonio por excepcion” is done in Quito. Religious ceremonies do not have legal validity under Ecuadorian law.

In order to complete a legal marriage, the Ecuadorian Government requires the following documentation for foreign, non-residents in Ecuador:

- a. Immigration migratory movement report (movimiento migratorio) issued by Ecuador’s National Directorate of Immigration (Direccion Nacional de Migracion) in order to prove that you have been in Ecuador legally for at least 75 days before getting married.
- b. Your valid U.S. passport with a valid non-immigrant visa (original and copy).
- c. Notarized certification of U.S. nationality such as birth certificate and marital status (translated to Spanish if applicable).

- d. Documents to prove the legal termination of any previous marriages (divorce, death or annulment certificates). U.S. documents must be authenticated by an Ecuadorian Consul or apostilled and accompanied by a certified translation into Spanish.
 - e. One adult witness for each person, with a valid photo ID card and voting certification (original and a copy).
6. **Adoption Regulations:** Ecuador is party to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. All adoptions between Ecuador and the United States must meet the requirements of both the Convention and U.S. law implementing the Convention. Ecuadorian law does not allow for an Ecuadorian child to travel to the United States to be adopted. Therefore, prospective adoptive parents must obtain a full and final adoption under Ecuadorian law before the child can immigrate to the United States. More information on the Convention can be found at: www.hcch.net.

To adopt from Ecuador, parents must first be found eligible to adopt by the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. More information is available at: www.uscis.gov.

Ecuadorian adoption law gives preference to adoptions made by Ecuadorian nationals within Ecuador. Inter-country adoptions are permitted only in exceptional cases, normally when there are no relatives or other Ecuadorians able to adopt orphans or become their guardians. More information can be found on the Department of State website at: www.adoption.state.gov/country/ecuador.html

7. **Travel to the Galapagos by Private Yacht:** Travel to the Galapagos Islands by private yacht must be pre-arranged with the Ecuadorian Ministry of Defense well in advance of the proposed trip. The Ministry of Defense issues licenses for these visits subject to a quota established by the Galapagos Islands National Park. Approval for these licenses can take from one to three months.

8. **The Law of Cultural Patrimony:** Attempts to remove pre-Columbian artifacts or colonial era works of art can result in heavy fines and up to two years imprisonment, as these items are protected by the Law of Cultural Patrimony.
9. **Hunting and Fishing Laws:** Licenses and rules for hunting and fishing can be obtained from the Ministry of Exterior Commerce, Industrialization, Fisheries and Tourism, Department of Fisheries, which is located at Av. Amazonas y Eloy Alfaro in Quito. Their phone number is (593-2) 254-6107.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

When calling from the U.S., first dial 011, then 593, then the number

Quito

U.S. Embassy	2-398-5000 or 5200 after hours
Emergencies:	911
Police:	101
Fire:	102
Ambulance Services:	911 or 102, EMI: 2-227-2277 or 4700 UTIM: 9-973-9801
Medical Air Evacuation:	Air Med: 2-246-9902 or 9-563-6363
Hospital Voz Andes:	2-226-2142
Hospital Metropolitano:	2-399-8000, ER 2-226-5020
Ecuadorian Immigration:	2-245-4122
Mariscal-Sucre International Airport:	2-294-4900

Guayaquil

U.S. Consulate General:	4-232-3570 or 1152 after hours
Police:	101
Firefighters:	112
Ambulance:	Eko Movil: 4-228-8888, Trauma Uno: 4-500-2500
Red Cross:	4-256-0674 or 4-256-1077
Hospitals:	
Vicja Kennedy:	4-228-9666
Alborada:	4-224-7900
Samborondon:	4-209-0039
Clinica Guayaquil:	4-256-3555 or 4-230-2825
Clinica Alcivar:	4-500-2500
Guayaquil Airport Immigration:	4-216-9000
Phone Number Information:	100